

its arms to me to invite me to be on the Raleigh City Council only having lived here about three years. Then having an opportunity in 1996 to come and join this group, which is very exciting to me because my father-in-law served in the Senate from 1954 to 1967. I did ask Janet Pruitt when I got here if I could have a seat that he sat in in this Chamber. The unfortunate thing was that he only ever sat in #1, and I thought I might wait a little bit for that. But as a non-North Carolinian native, it is been very exciting to be a part of the change that this State has seen over the past ten to twelve years. We've grown so much. We've changed so much. You don't get very many opportunities in life to be in a leadership position at a time of change. If you think about it, really the last time this State changed as much as we've changed in the last ten years was back in the '50s when we had the big change in the agriculture economy. So it's just been thrilling to watch. It's also exciting to know that a lot of people in the State of North Carolina that are voting and paying attention to things are a lot like me. They made a conscious decision to move to this State. You were talking yesterday about the tourism and being down in your area. One of the most exciting days that I've had in the last while was...Lizzie and I went up on an Indian Guides, Indian Princess deal to Washington, D.C., and we did all that. And we took a real fun trip back to Raleigh. I had always wanted to go to Yorktown; I'd never been to Yorktown before, and I thought that was something we needed to do. That night we drove in the dark through that part of the country and we spent the night out near Kill Devil Hills. We woke up the next morning and did that, and Ham, you'll be happy to know that as Lizzie just finished her fourth grade that she had all of the knowledge of the history of the state. She was very excited to be there at the sight of the first flight. We went down to Cape Hatteras. She knew that. But probably the most exciting thing because we were traveling in March and there's not a lot of tourism at that time of year, but we went over to Roanoke Island, and went to the facility there. And there wasn't a soul there except for the people working – the state park folks, and she just dominated their time. She wanted to know where that post was that said 'Croatan' or whatever it was on it. You see I don't know these things. You know, I can tell you about the San Jacinto or the battle of the Alamo or something like that, but I don't know all my North Carolina history the way I ought to. But getting to see it through a fourth-grader's eyes is really impressive. So anyway, I appreciate all the friendship that you all have shown me. It's interesting; I missed voting on some votes this session – on today's session – because I was negotiating something on our behalf, and I came in and talked to Fletcher, and sometimes negotiations can get really testy. The relationships between this Chamber and the other Chamber are not always couched in a degree of respect or courtesy that I think ought to be shown. But always in this Chamber, when you're negotiating internally here, I've always had, even with really good disagreements, a sense of courtesy. Maybe that's just the way the Chamber is; maybe that's just the way they all are across the country. But I'm sure glad I got to serve here and not over there."

**Senator Basnight:**

"I got elected in '84, came here in '85. I sat down by a round, chubby African American. He had an afro about as big as four bowling balls up there on his head, and he became the best friend I had in the North Carolina Senate. He gave me so much about life and about people. I would call Ralph at nights, and I can remember the telephone calls where I called Ralph were lengthy. We would stay on the phone thirty minutes, forty-five minutes, and you could always hear the cash register working. Ralph was always working that cash register making certain the line was moving, and

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